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# 2 More House Panels Bar Contra Aid

## *Third Committee Backs It; Floor Vote Set for March 19*

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Two more House committees voted yesterday to disapprove President Reagan's request for \$100 million in aid to the contras in Nicaragua, while Democrats and Republicans alike warned the White House that its strident anticommunist rhetoric is hurting its own cause.

The House Appropriations Committee, on a voice vote, recommended rejection of the aid, while the House Foreign Affairs Committee voted 23 to 18 against the measure.

A third panel, the House Armed Services Committee, also acting on a voice vote, recommended approval, completing preliminary House action and setting the stage for a floor vote now scheduled for March 19. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence voted 9 to 7 Wednesday for disapproval.

While the panels were voting yesterday, members of the House and the Senate complained about the tone and thrust of the administration's argument on behalf of the plan.

Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-Kan.) complained of "distortions" from the administration and of instances of "simplistic reasoning" that were "highly offensive."

Among the "distortions" she cited was "the suggestion that this is a purely partisan issue—a disagreement between Republicans in white hats and Democrats wrapped in red banners." Another was "the argument that this is a matter of patriotism—those who love America will support the president and those who oppose want to abandon San Diego to the Sandinistas," the Marxist government in Nicaragua.

In the House, Rep. Michael D. Barnes (D-Md.) compared the administration's tactics to those of the late Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy (R-Wis.) during the 1950s.

Accusations that opponents of the administration's policy in Nicaragua are "communist dupes," Barnes said, "would be laughable if they were not coming from the president of the United States and his top advisers. Frankly, I do not think we have heard such offensive nonsense from our top political leaders since the 1950s. These statements are the moral equivalent of McCarthyism." Barnes, a leading opponent of aid to the contras, added that the administration's arguments "are probably doing more to unite the Congress against his policies than anything I as an individual could do."

Responding to Kassebaum, White House communications director Patrick J. Buchanan said, "We're not questioning anyone's patriotism or motives . . . We're questioning the wisdom and judgment" of critics of the aid.

But asked yesterday whether he agrees that foes of the aid package are supporting communism, Reagan replied, "If so, inadvertently." He

added that he had had enough experience with "communist subversion" when he was in the movie business "to know that a great many people are deceived and not aware that what they're doing is inimical to the interests of the United States."

Reagan himself has set much of the tone that Kassebaum and others criticized yesterday. Pressing Wednesday for the aid, he said, "If we don't want to see the map of Central America covered in a sea of red, eventually lapping at our own borders, we must act now."

Kassebaum and Sen. Daniel J. Evans (R-Wash.) met with Secretary of State George P. Shultz yesterday and complained that their concerns about the contra leadership, effectiveness of the current aid program and the goals of U.S. policy had not been addressed.

The two and other key Republican senators told Shultz that the aid proposal would not pass the Republican-controlled Senate Foreign Relations Committee in its present form so the administration is now expected to bypass that committee and take the measure straight to the Senate floor.

*Staff writer Joanne Omang  
contributed to this report.*